



# Washington State Department of Agriculture Hearing Notice

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, Washington 98504-2560

## **Butterfly bush proposed for state noxious weed list; hearing set for Nov. 16**

**OLYMPIA** – Concern about the increasing invasion of natural areas by a non-native ornamental plant has led to a proposal to classify a species of butterfly bush as a Class C noxious weed.

Public comment about butterfly bush and several other proposed listings will be heard when the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board holds a hearing at 1:30 p.m. Nov. 16 at the Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center, 990 SW Rock Creek Drive, Stevenson in Skamania County.

Noxious weeds are non-native, invasive plants that are highly destructive, competitive or difficult to control and, once established, threaten Washington's natural resources and economy. The board annually reviews the state's noxious weed list, which currently totals 123 weeds and is the basis for weed regulation in the state. County noxious weed control boards and weed districts carry out state noxious weed law at the local level.

As suggested by its name, butterfly bush draws butterflies to its long, colorful flower clusters. Since native butterfly populations evolved in the absence of this shrub, they are not dependent upon it for survival. Indeed, the scientific literature suggests that in the wild, butterfly bush may crowd out native plants needed by butterflies for reproduction.

Originally from China, butterfly bush has long been recognized as a threat in England and New Zealand. The species that is seeding itself into Washington state riparian areas, roadsides and other spaces goes by the scientific name *Buddleja davidii*. Many popular varieties of butterfly bush are derived from that species, although varieties of some of the other *Buddleja* species are thought to present less of a threat. *Buddleja davidii* was added to the Oregon noxious weed list earlier this year.

Listing on the state Class C noxious weed list would not forbid the sale of *Buddleja davidii*, nor require its removal from gardens. Individual county weed boards could require control of escaped populations. Gardeners with existing plants are encouraged to cut off the flowers after they bloom, a common gardening practice called "dead heading," and dispose of them in the trash, not the compost bin. This will prevent the numerous wind-borne seeds from invading other properties. Nursery shoppers who want to buy butterfly bush are encouraged to seek plants from the *Buddleja* genus that have species names other than *davidii*.

Other proposals to change the noxious weed list for 2005 include designating Japanese knotweed, Bohemian knotweed, and houndstongue for mandatory control in Douglas County. While a state-funded weed survey of Douglas County this summer found serious noxious weed problems, those three weeds were found to still be in limited distribution. As part of the change, Bohemian knotweed would be moved from the Class C to the Class B weed list.

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Control of sulfur cinquefoil, a Class B noxious weed, would no longer be mandatory in Pierce County under another proposal. The weed board in that county says that the plant is very widely distributed, so control is no longer practical.

**Aquatic weeds infesting lakes**

An aquatic weed that is known to infest four or five lakes in the state is proposed for addition to the Class A noxious weed list. Grass-leaved arrowhead would have to be eradicated if the proposal is adopted by the State Weed Board.

Curly-leaf pondweed is also a non-native aquatic weed. However, having arrived in Washington long ago, it is very widely distributed. It is proposed as an addition to the Class C list.

Several changes are proposed in the listing of saltcedar. In arid regions of Eastern Washington, the high water usage of this invasive non-native tree threatens to lower water tables and dry up streams. One proposed change would remove a control exemption for plants intentionally cultivated prior to 2004. Some trees on abandoned homesteads and in similar situations are significant sources of seed. Other proposals would remove Stevens and Walla Walla counties from the areas where control of saltcedar is mandatory.

The text of changes proposed for next year's noxious weed list is available through the State Weed Board office. Also available is the technical ["written finding"](#) concerning the proposal to list butterfly bush. Those documents can be obtained from Shari Kincy, P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, WA 98504; (360) 902-1901 or through e-mail at [Skincy@agr.wa.gov](mailto:Skincy@agr.wa.gov).

Comments can be submitted to Executive Director Steve McGonigal, Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board, P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, WA 98504; or by fax to McGonigal at (360) 902-2094 or e-mail at [SmcGonigal@agr.wa.gov](mailto:SmcGonigal@agr.wa.gov). The deadline for written comments is Nov. 9. Verbal testimony may be delivered at the hearing.

For more information, visit the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board's Web site at [www.nwcb.wa.gov](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov).

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